

**FEMA PUBLIC NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR
DEVELOPMENT OF TEMPORARY EMERGENCY HOUSING AT
ARCADIA SITE IN DESOTO COUNTY, FLORIDA**

Interested parties are hereby notified that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) for a proposed temporary manufactured housing (mobile home or travel trailer) site. The site would temporarily house disaster victims, displaced by Hurricane Charley in August 2004, for a period of up to about 24 months. The President signed a Disaster Declaration, FEMA-1539-DR-FL, on August 13, 2004 for this event.

The proposed action consists of developing an approximately 80-acre site for manufactured housing units, to be located south of Fiveash Road, north of E. Gibson Road, west of N.E. Turner Street and about ¼ mile east of Highway 17 in DeSoto County, Florida (termed "Arcadia Site"). Activities would include, where necessary, site clearing, grading, road construction, filling, the placement of utilities (electricity, telephones, water, and sewer), and the transport to and hook-up of manufactured homes on the site. Per the National Environmental Policy Act (42 USC 4371 *et seq.*) and associated environmental statutes, a draft EA was prepared to evaluate the action's potential impacts on the human and natural environment. The draft EA considers project alternatives, the existing environment, the alternatives' environmental consequences, and ways to avoid, reduce, or mitigate any adverse environmental consequences.

Due to the emergency nature of this action, the public comment period will be brief - from September 29 to October 1, 2004. Verbal comments will be accepted at (407) 397-7282 between 8:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. An answering machine will be available to record voice messages during non-business hours. The draft EA can be viewed and downloaded from FEMA's website: <http://www.fema.gov/ehp/docs.shtm>. It is also available for public review at the FEMA Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) at the **South Florida Community College DRC**, 2251 N.E. Turner Street, Arcadia; and **DeSoto County Public Library**, 125 N. Hillsborough Avenue, Arcadia. The DRC's hours are Monday through Sunday, 8:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. The libraries' hours are Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, 9:30 A.M. to 6:00 P.M., Tuesday, 9:30 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. and Saturday, 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. If no substantive comments are received, the EA will be finalized and this initial Public Notice will also serve as the final Public Notice.

All other questions regarding disaster assistance or the availability of emergency temporary housing should be directed to FEMA's Teleregistration line at 800-621-3362 and TTY 800-462-7585.